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SURVIVAL DIFFICULTY:

Class 2e - Environmental

- ◆ Unsafe
- ◆ Secure
- ◆ Non-Entity Hazards



The main hallway of Level 196.

Description

Level 196's main area is that of a long, singular hallway that all wanderers who arrive at the level start within. This hallway, similar to other Backrooms levels, is infinite in both directions, and each wanderer who enters the level is deposited at random areas within it.

The hall of the level is extremely slim, barely allowing for two individuals to cross side-by-side at any given time. The carpet is mostly tinted beige, with black borders against the slim walls that almost blend into the wooden skirting along the bottom of said walls. Periodically, an oval-shaped pattern can be found printed into the thin carpet. The design itself is a symmetrically inverted, six-swirl design, possessing two swirls that cross along the middle section of the oval, and two on either end going lengthways. Much like the rest of the ever-stretching carpet, this emblem is also bordered by black carpet, as well as a thin strip of crimson that circles inside the main black border.

The walls of this level are identically designed, white-painted PVC tiles, usually having handrails going down either side of the level's walling at random and irregular lengths. The ceilings are built from identical PVC tiling, periodically interrupted by small, circular lights that emit anywhere from extremely dim to extremely bright light.¹

At random points within the hallway, one can find laminated and reflective doors of rich, dark brown wood. The doors themselves are almost completely plain, with the only object on them being the door handle. These handles are built of a gold-painted brass material that utilise a modern pushdown door handle design, with the design of the actual handles themselves containing a keycard scanner similar to ones in hotel doors; however, the mechanisms for keycard scanning on these doors are either deactivated or simply not present.²

Behind the Doors





A natural wall of scrap found behind an orange door sign with "scrap" printed onto it.



A yellow-signed world with a picture of a brick printed onto it, containing—rather appropriately—bricks.



A world filled with neatly stacked, plastic stools. This world in particular was signed with a green sign and had a picture of an individual sitting down.

Behind every single door inside of Level 196 is an outdoor, almost earth-like geographical landscape. These worlds contain geographical resemblance to valleys, hills, mountains, riverbanks, shorelines, canyons, oceans, and any other natural formation one may expect to find within [The Frontrooms](#). However, the single key difference between these landscapes and the ones they represent is that each of them is built out of billions upon billions of one singular object/type of object.

These objects can range from any item, no matter how complex the item in question may be, ranging from any one element on the periodic table to the most obscure or intricately built machinery. To the best of [The M.E.G.'s](#) knowledge, each item-based world only appears once inside the entire hallway, making every doorway in Level 196 completely distinguished from one another.

The outside territories are believed to be completely infinite, with the only way back into the hallway being the door that leads into the world. The main hallway itself does not exist within the outdoor areas; however, the laminated door itself—which sits upright and doesn't back against any surface—does. The hallway can be viewed from within the door when opening it, but only when opened from the entering side. On the opposite side, the doorway inside will lose its non-Euclidean connection into the hallway when opened, preventing travel back into the hallway until the door is used from the correct side.

Each world in Level 196, whilst looking similar on the surface, each world contains unique geography that generally resembles areas from the middle areas of Europe. Despite each world being unique, however, a list of what biomes are believed to exist has progressively been worked on over countless years. As such, to the best of [The M.E.G.'s](#) knowledge, Level 196's worlds possess the following geographical features:

Rolling Hills

- This type of landscape is the most common of Level 196's worlds, presumably due to its simplicity of being gentle, sloped inclines and declines. All doors to the different worlds exist within these rolling hills and stretch on for approximately 150 meters in every direction before the scenery changes to one of the other landscape varieties. Rolling hills are the easiest type of "biome" to traverse, even if the hills themselves still pose a tough challenge for worlds made of smaller materials. The ease of traversal of these lands instead comes from the fact that natural, gentle valleys form between these rolling hills that very rarely experience increased or decreased elevation.
 - After 150 meters in each direction, the rolling hills will begin to diminish and progressively turn into the other

"biomes" that will be listed below. However, despite this, other rolling hills do exist within Level 196's various worlds, the closest of which is 400 meters south³ of any entrance door.

Canyons

- Existing at both the east and west sides of Level 196's worlds, these canyons can be easily set apart from rolling hills due to the fact that their inclines are far steeper, oftentimes coming up to flat 90-degree angles, whilst the areas that aren't inclined are incredibly flat, and oftentimes even form plateaued flooring. Depending on the material, climbing the canyon's sides is a task that can either be extremely easy or life-threatening. For worlds with a more solid build structure, climbing can often be easier than climbing actual rock walls, especially if the material is of a modern and square type. However, for worlds that are made out of individual and small materials, climbing these walls can cause a domino effect of them toppling over, which has resulted in suffocation and crushing in prior instances of climbing being attempted.

Rockfaces and Mountains

- Similar to the canyons, rockfaces and mountains possess extremely steep inclines, especially in the case of the former appearing. Rockfaces, whilst seldom being made out of the namesake material, usually take up the base of extremely tall mountains. They are oftentimes sturdily packed together, helped by the pressing weight of the mountaintops above them. The rockfaces tend to have almost 90-degree walls, making further traversal across the landscape difficult if one accidentally wanders into the two recorded dead ends recorded at the closest mountain to the doors.⁴
- The mountains themselves stretch upwards to be relatively tall in comparison with the rest of the outdoor environment's geography; however, the maximum these mountains are recorded to go up to is only 500 meters. This height, whilst still a nearly impossible task to climb due to the materials that these mountains will more often be built of, is still a comparatively small height compared to mountains both in and out of The Backrooms.
 - Mountains can be found mainly in the southern portions of the outdoor landscapes, meaning that one will have to backtrack to the direction they naturally come out from in order to reach these areas.

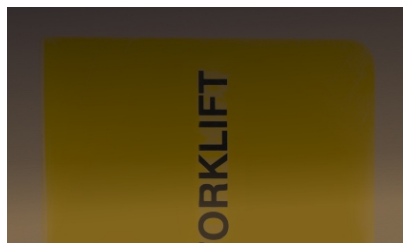
Riverbanks

- Behaving differently from the other "biomes" within Level 196's worlds, these riverbanks do not occupy a specific square or circular area, and instead possess the quality of cutting through practically every biome on Level 196. The riverbanks can be identified by encountering a V-shaped cutting that disturbs the natural flow of the biome one is currently within.⁵ Additionally, these riverbanks descend to what can be described as a "river"; however, the river in question is merely the portion between the two riverbanks where the declining embankment ceases, and a more flat area of terrain begins to connect the two embankments.
 - It is unknown just how many rivers exist within these worlds, as there is a possibility that each river connects in an infinitely long, winding route. However, given the infinite nature of these worlds, confirming or denying this theory is an impossible affair and one that would offer little reward even if it is somehow proven right or wrong.

Coasts and Oceans

- Only existing in the far reaches beyond the exiting door, in the range of around 5-7 kilometers away from it, the terrain tends to flatten out and become far less realistic in its geography due to that. Initially, it was believed that these flatlands areas were the eternal perimeter around Level 196's worlds, acting as an infinitely flat land similar to a salt flat. However, despite the great lengths that the oceans span,⁶ more typical and usual land exists on the other side of them.

Signs





An example of the various signs that one can expect to find nearby this level's doors.

Near every door, plastic signs can be discovered nailed to the wall. The base plastic of these signs can come in green, red, orange, yellow, blue, as well as black and white, with the prints on the plastic exclusively being in either a black or white hue.²

The prints on these signs contain either a 2D clipart of any item or any form of a noun. The contents of these signs, whilst appearing on any picture or video in the exact way the individual taking the photograph perceived it, do possess an element of fluctuating change to them. Depending on a wanderer's most spoken language, general knowledge of items, and what colours they associate with certain feelings and expressions, the sign will present itself differently to best align with those conditions. For example, a sign may present itself as red to indicate a dangerous landscape on the other side of its door for those who grew up in western culture, but the same sign may appear as white for someone who grew up around Chinese culture.

The signs on the door, whilst already displaying what will be behind the door itself, also hint as to what danger may lie on the other side of the doorway in question. This specifically is done by the colour of the base plastic, and whilst exceptions exist, the colours usually work as follows:⁸

Colour	Danger	Recommended precautions	World material examples
Green	Safe	Wanderers may enter and explore the world with minimal risk.	Dirt, tree logs, stone, plastic, blankets, concrete, cork, and gemstones.
Red	Extreme danger	These doors should not be entered unless the materials inside are desperately needed. The risk of death or serious injury is very high.	Leaves, ⁹ slimes, and anything flammable, any materials that are extremely small and/or tough to walk on.
Orange	Moderate danger	Safety is variable, and entering the doors can be worthwhile, depending on the material. Whether or to enter or not should be decided on a case-by-case basis.	Small vehicles, water, fruit juice, clothing, large and solid fruits, boulders, and glass.
Yellow	Light danger	While these worlds pose minimal risk, wanderers should watch their footing due to a risk of injury.	Sofas, cushions, doors, balconies, houses, buildings.

Blue	Obscure/miscellaneous	These worlds have strange materials with a difficult-to-classify hazard posed. The risk varies greatly on a case-by-case basis, and prepare accordingly.	Newtonian fluid, honey, house appliances, and anything made of fragile material.
Black	Almost instant death	Merely opening these doors may result in death. Do not open them under any circumstances.	Air, spatial vacuum, mustard gas, carbon monoxide, 10 swords, chainsaws, and wind farm propellers. 11

The colour coordination of signs, whilst important, should not be treated as an absolute identifier of danger. With the exception of black signs, it is possible to survive and traverse worlds that are otherwise extremely dangerous, whether that be because they have the right protective equipment, prior training, or anything that puts one's survival capabilities above that of an average explorer.

Finally, a list of anomalous, interesting, or otherwise unique worlds can be found below. Whilst the chances of discovering these rooms are slim, these descriptions exist solely to articulate some of the unique environmental hazards that one should be prepared for within the level.

"Carbon Monoxide"



A room door in Level 196 that was simply labelled "water", with a yellow base colour. It is believed that this world used to take the shape of Level 196's usual geography, but flattened due to gravity.

On an expedition trip to Level 196, two explorers^{[12](#)} were attempting to find correlations and patterns between the signs and the worlds that they represented. After the two had opened and looked into approximately 25 doors, the duo came across a black sign to the left of a door with no form of printed text or imagery. Believing this to be some form of exit to [Level 197](#), the pair opened the door. However, upon opening the door, the two explorers were met with the usual blue sky and clouds that all of 196's worlds have in common instead of the level in question.

Believing their investigation for that world to be over, they left the area with the door open. Within minutes, however, the two had stopped sending images and messages back to their base of origin. It was only learned later on—after their bodies were accidentally discovered—that the world door they opened was filled with carbon monoxide gas, and had suffocated the duo whilst also contaminating the local area of the hallway.

"Level 196"

During a more recent exploration of Level 196, a blue-signed door aptly titled "Level 196" was discovered. Upon going inside, the explorer found several different parts to Level 196's main hallway pulled and stretched along the same general geographical layout that the level's worlds shared.^{[13](#)}

After the individual had explored the world for approximately an hour, they came across a large mountain exclusively of this level's laminated doors as seen from inside the hallway. However, upon using them, these doors were revealed to be basic functioning doors.

Exactly why the door was labelled "Level 196" is unknown, as Level 196's name was purely the result of The M.E.G.'s arbitrary level naming system.¹⁴ However, it is theorised that the signs' tendency to change to better present information to wanderers came into effect with the name, and that to people working under organizations with a different naming system, the sign would change to match their name for Level 196.

"Entity 8"

A door with a nearby sign labelled "Entity 8" was once discovered by the B.N.T.G. whilst gathering various supplies on their runs. This event, as seems to be standard for the B.N.T.G., was recorded on a camera attached to the worker assigned to gathering supplies, which was broadcasted back to the [Trader's Keep](#). After spending almost two days collecting useful supplies from certain doors, the individual came across a black sign labelled "Entity 8".

Upon opening this door, the B.N.T.G. employee was met with a usual landscape. However, the entire ground of the level was entirely coated in live hounds that were embedded into the floor, packed so tightly against each other that the only action they could do was flail any limbs they could move and bark into the air. The sound emanating from the world was a cacophonous mixture of millions of different howls and growls, as well as the sounds of gory and rough kicks and squirms. The witness of this door froze in fear, though eventually they either tripped or was grabbed by a hound. After, the individual was pulled into the mass of hounds, and subsequently lost. The camera only stayed operational for a few moments, but the screaming of the individual was replaced by ravenous and bloodied biting noises before the camera cut off.

"Manganese Heptoxide"



A world filled with old, seemingly scrapped cars. The sign that correlated to the world was red, due to the fact that all cars had operating engines, and explosive fuel tanks.

On a different trip to the Entity 8 door encounter, yet one equally as fatal, a different B.N.T.G. employee had just begun their first shift of a four-day scavenging mission. At the time, the individual was on their 15th scavenged world before coming to a red sign that simply read "Manganese Heptoxide". Confused about what that compound was, the individual radioed back to their base on [Level 40](#) to request information about the substance, but upon getting no reply back due to difficulties with the new radio system, the scavenger instead chose to just open the door for themselves to check.

The final few frames of the video show a flat expanse of dark green liquid. The air in this land, in the final words of the explorer, was "extremely co[ld]". Before even finishing their sentence, however, the entire world began to erupt into flames and emit large chunks of an ash-like substance. Within a moment, the camera was enveloped in flames and cut out just a moment later. It was only discovered after this moment that Manganese Heptoxide is a volatile compound that decays rapidly and explosively upon reaching certain temperatures. After the door was opened, it is believed to have reacted with the moisture and heat that came from within the main hallway and subsequently caused the entire body of water to burst into flames and kill the B.N.T.G. member.

Bases, Outposts, and Communities

Setting up a base on Level 196, at least in the traditional sense of what a base is universally recognised as is ultimately an impossible feat. The potentially infinite length of Level 196, coupled with the fact that each wanderer appears at a seemingly random area of the said presumed infinite length, means creating and sustaining a group that can also keep in communication with other levels impossible. Despite this, however, "groups" on Level 196 sent out by Backrooms groups not affiliated with [The M.E.G.](#) still exist. There are, presumably, a fair few of these individuals that come to Level 196 in order to farm random supplies and return back to their base, however, the only group currently confirmed to do this are the [B.N.T.G.](#)

B.N.T.G. Asset 0196 Resource Runners

The B.N.T.G. has at least seven individuals on their payroll who are specifically allocated to live long-term on Level 196. They carry an initial weeks worth of basic food, a sleeping bag, and rudimentary weaponry for their return journeys. These individuals work mostly in complete solitude and eat, sleep, as well as forage within Level 196 for up to weeks on end; exploring the various worlds to scavenge the perfect objects from each door they access.

The employees are instructed to only leave Level 196 after their bags are entirely filled with requested supplies, and get a base pay of 309 standard credits per day that they're away from whatever base they originated from, with an extra rise of 50 credits per day they were gone if their bag is, quote, "completely filled". This, according to low-ranked individuals who work within the B.N.T.G, is a completely arbitrary statement, and rarely do those that ever complete their work ever get this extra raise of credits.

This information was completely unknown until extremely recently, wherein [The M.E.G.](#) and B.N.T.G. had their first official negotiation after their disbanding six years ago in order to settle who is allowed to explore what areas of the new anomaly that has recently befallen [Level 13](#). The negotiations have ended in the B.N.T.G. temporarily aligning with The M.E.G. to help investigate the currently undisclosed anomaly that has occurred on said level, which is still being looked into by both parties, as well as other groups, as of writing.

Entrances And Exits

Entrances

Exits into Level 196, however varied they may be, will always place wanderers into a completely random part of the hallway of this level. This is decided per person, meaning groups that enter Level 196 will immediately become disconnected from one another. Whilst reuniting with one's group is possible, it is extremely improbable due to the infinite length of the level's hallway. Along with that, all entrances cannot be reverse-engineered into exits, as whatever exit one was using prior disappears upon use.

- Entryway to Level 196 can be done from [Level -1](#), as some of the doors along its monochrome hallways can have a painted-on illustration of this level's carpet.
 - In a similar vein to the Level -1 entrance, doors within [Level 21](#) that brand the exact same emblem will also lead to Level 196.
- Within [Level 88](#), a level not too dissimilar to Level 196, the otherwise random carpet patterns present on the level can show extremely faint outlines of the same carpet logo within this level's hallway. Should one walk onto patterns, they will noclip into this level.
- Any door within [Level 109](#) that is labelled, regardless of what its contents may actually describe,¹⁵ will lead to Level 196 if entered.
- The final entrance to Level 196 is from [Level q](#)'s beach house hallways, wherein the rather common rectangular shapes on the ceiling can occasionally have their interior spaces be pushed back to reveal a large, black hole in the ceilings. Should one find a way to climb into these spaces, one will arrive at Level 196.

Exits

Whilst there are undoubtedly more exits than the ones listed below, finding the currently known exits is usually a rather easy feat. Unlike the regular doorways within Level 196, the exits can appear multiple times (sometimes even appearing right next to the other), which has greatly benefitted explorers in understanding what exits to other levels, and what exit to worlds.

- Doorways with signs that have text similar to that of `"-> | <-"` will always lead into the initial room inside [Level -3](#).
- [Level 7](#) can be accessed via any blue signs that have an image of still, flat water. These are usually represented by a wave pattern similar to that of `~~~~~`. Entering a door with wave or water patterns of any other shape¹⁶ will not lead to Level 7, and instead will lead to their respective worlds.
- Any signs that show chess-like game pieces that do not bear any resemblance to usual chess pieces used in traditional games are an indicator that its allocated door will lead to [Level 157](#).¹⁷ Any door signs that do resemble typical chess pieces will usually open to a landscape that is instead just made out of said pieces, rather than a level exit.
- Any door sign that lacks text or imagery will always have a door nearby that leads to [Level 197](#) and exits into the corresponding zone that is the closest colour to the sign. Note

that signs that do not have colours corresponding to the zone colours of Level 197 will not lead to the aforementioned level, and will instead lead to a world.

- [Level 202](#) is enterable via doorways that have signs attached that resemble sticks of chalk used to write with. These signs will usually have lines emanating off of the chalk stick to imitate a glowing aura, which differentiates Level 202's exits from any other signs containing chalk prints.
- One may come across a door that is completely splattered with paint that causes it to look almost 2 dimensional on the affected area. Entering these doors can lead to [Level 330](#).
- Finally, Any white signs that have a flame, flower, water droplet, or cloud clipart printed onto them will either lead to [Level 368](#), [Level 369](#), [Level 370](#), and [Level 371](#) respectively.

[Author\(s\)](#)

« [Level 195](#) | [Level 196](#) | [Level 197](#) »

Footnotes

1. However, as the image used above may imply, most of the lights produce a more dim glow.
2. Experiments have previously been done on these door handles to see if scanning [Level Keys](#) would create an entryway to the level the key originates from. However, this experimentation yielded no results.
3. South, in this context, does not strictly refer to the actual compass direction, and instead uses "north" as the direction one faces when entering one of Level 196's worlds.
4. Should one find these dead ends, the only available option is to either climb over them or backtrack, which should be carefully considered depending on the material any given world is constructed of.
5. Examples being a deeper cutting between two hilltops, and part of a mountain being cut through to make room for a river.
6. Being about 3-6 kilometers long depending on the area being explored.
7. Whatever contrasts best with the rest of the sign.
8. This colour diagram is specifically tailored to western colour interpretations and beliefs. For other cultures, please refer to other graphs saved elsewhere on-site.
9. Worlds that contain leaves have little solid ground, and anyone stepping onto them without care may fall through and either suffocate or be crushed.
10. Gas worlds are somewhat frozen in the usual shape of the land; this is something only theorised to be the case with the vacuum, carbon monoxide, and other invisible gases. However, their contents will not cease to bleed into the hallway if their doors are opened.
11. Through unknown means, select object doors (like the two described prior) will have the items that comprise them in a permanently powered state, hence their danger.
12. The pair finding each other in Level 196 was purely coincidental, as they originally started out as two separate teams that ended up meeting one another.
13. It must be noted that the features of Level 196's hallways were not bent in a way that gave the impression that any of it was broken or damaged, with the features of the halls instead appearing stretched and elasticated to fit around the usual topology.
14. Especially when groups like [The Eyes of Argos](#) and formerly [The Leaders](#) use(d) entirely different methods of level organisation.
15. Which oftentimes is either completely garbled and incoherent text, or signs for worlds that would not be typically found in hospitals like living rooms, bowling alleys, or classrooms.
16. Such as large waves, beaches, boats, water buoys, etc.
17. These abstract chess pieces in question may resemble equally abstract parts used in chess games that defer from the usual designs of pieces, although these similarities are believed to be purely coincidental.

[cc](#) [level](#) [sd-class-other](#)

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